

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE  
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVES PROGRAM  
OGALLALA AQUIFER INITIATIVE  
APPLICATION EVALUATION RANKING TOOL—STATE AND LOCAL QUESTIONS**

**Additional Requirements for this Category**

- Applications must achieve an annual water savings of 10 percent from the benchmarked water use by the end of the contract and:
  - o Producer reports to the Division of Water Resources (DWR) or water districts will be used to determine the benchmark condition of water use in the Agricultural Operation. Producers will furnish reports from the previous five years to determine the average benchmark condition, and each year during the contract.
- All applications under this ranking category must meet or exceed the minimum use guideline of 66 percent. This is calculated by 5 year average benchmarked irrigated acres divided by water right authorized acres. The application acres must also have been irrigated at an average rate of at least eight-acre inches/acre/year for the 5 year average benchmark irrigated acres.
- Producer will verify that water savings (water rights) will not be used elsewhere for agricultural use or any other purpose.
- Eligible applications must have a point of diversion that is located within the Ogallala Aquifer Initiative (OAI) Priority area (see attachment 3) as determined by the CPGI tool.
- If the land is converted to non-irrigation, the producer must:
  - o Ensure proper wellhead protection to ensure groundwater protection.
  - o Ensure all acres under the water right/well will be taken out of irrigation for the contract period.
- If the land continues to be irrigated, producer must currently have or will install a functioning state-approved water measuring device to state installation specifications (Kansas Administrative Regulations [K.A.R.] 5-1-6) before financial assistance is received.
- If the land continues to be irrigated, well capacity must be able to meet the seasonal Net Irrigation Requirement (NIR), with 50 percent chance rainfall, for the crop grown.
- If the land continues to be irrigated, the producer will stay within the certified rate, amount, and location of the existing water right at the time the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) contract is obligated.
- If the land continues to be irrigated, the producer will use an irrigation scheduling system that meets Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG) requirement.
- If the land continues to be irrigated, no end gun or similar appurtenances will be present or used on the pivot system for the lifespan of the system.
- If the land continues to be irrigated, Conservation Practice 449, Irrigation Water Management, is required in the conservation plan and will receive financial assistance if not already established, per program policy.

State Ranking Questions—400 total points possible	Points
<p>1. If applicable, answer ONE of the following questions describing your plan to obtain a net water savings in your agricultural operation. If none apply, leave the answers “NO”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The entire unit of concern (100 percent) will be converted from irrigated to non-irrigated (STARTING with the first FULL cropping season of the contract) on the entire water right. Producer will install proper wellhead protection and will verify that water rights will not be used elsewhere. (350 points)</li> <li>b. The Farm Irrigation Rating Index (FIRI) will be increased by at least 20 points. (25 points)</li> <li>c. The Farm Irrigation Rating Index (FIRI) will be increased by 5 to 19.9 points. (10 points)</li> </ul>	350 Point(s)
<p>2. Answer the following question related to application water usage. <b>Water Usage = 5 Year Average Acres Irrigated [divided by] Authorized Acres.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Application water usage, by water right, is greater than or equal to 70 percent. (50 points)</li> </ul>	50 Point(s)

Local Ranking Questions – 250 total points possible	Points
<p>1. If applicable, answer ONE of the following two questions related to Kansas Geological Survey (KGS)-identified sensitive groundwater areas. If neither applies, leave the answers “NO”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Greater than or equal to 50 percent of the unit of concern is located within a KGS- identified sensitive groundwater area. (50 points)</li> <li>b. Any part of the unit of concern, but less than 50 percent, is located within a KGS- identified sensitive groundwater area. (25 points)</li> </ul>	50 Point(s)
<p>2. Answer the following questions related to Intensive Groundwater Use Conservation Areas (IGUCAs), Quick Response Areas (QRA), and Local Enhanced Management Areas (LEMAs):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Any part of the unit of concern is located in an IGUCA or a proposed IGUCA. (50 points)</li> <li>b. Any part of the unit of concern is located within a QRA. (50 points)</li> <li>c. Any part of the unit of concern is located within a LEMA. (50 points)</li> </ul>	150 Point(s)
<p>3. Application was deferred from a previous funding period in the Program Contracts System (ProTracts). (50 points)</p>	50 Point(s)